



# 2005 Legislative Session Review

## 10TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Rep. Barbara Bailey & Rep. Chris Strow



**REPRESENTATIVE  
BARBARA BAILEY**

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**COMMITTEES:**

Health Care  
Ranking Republican  
Appropriations

Summer 2005

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2005 legislative session came to a close April 24. It was very expensive for taxpayers and one that clearly did not reflect our priorities as your representatives.

We began the 2005 session committed to protecting families and employers against tax increases and adopting balanced and responsible state budgets. We listened when you made your opinions clear by overwhelmingly voting against a sales tax increase last fall, and when you contacted our offices with your views this session.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts this session to improve our state's economy, the majority party had other priorities.

Instead of reducing the cost of government, and encouraging Washington job providers by simplifying and reforming our state's regulatory system, the majority party took our state backward by increasing taxes and fees at a time when our economy is beginning to improve and businesses and families are getting back on track.

Perhaps the best way to describe the 2005 session is as one that was full of missed opportunities.

While it was discouraging, it could have been much worse had we not put a stop to several bills that would have taken away your rights and taken money out of your pocketbook.

The following newsletter provides an overview of the 2005 session. As always, we'd like to hear what you think. Please feel free to contact us at any of the contact numbers listed or via email. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rep. Barbara Bailey

Rep. Chris Strow



**REPRESENTATIVE  
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Agriculture & Trade  
Financial Institutions &  
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# Representative Barbara Bailey

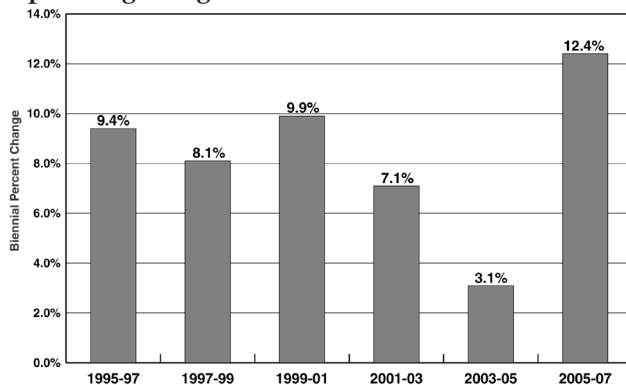
## 2005 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

### Budget brings more spending, tax hikes

With our state's economy on the road to recovery, the March economic forecast showed incoming revenues would be up by \$1.7 billion. That would have allowed a 7 percent spending increase in the new biennium without raising any new taxes. Instead, the majority party raised taxes by more than \$400 million and increased spending by 12.4 percent, the highest increase in 14 years. The Legislature also shortchanged the state's pension fund by \$323 million and dipped into health care funds for low-income families, seniors and children to pay for their spending increase.

This is an irresponsible budget that will create a deficit of more than \$1 billion going into the next biennium. As a House Appropriations Committee member, **I used every opportunity to vote against this unsustainable plan.** I also strongly objected to legislation to eliminate the voter-approved I-601 spending limit, which the majority party passed to make it easier to raise taxes and increase spending. The June revenue forecast projecting an additional \$450 million into the state coffers underscores what I have said all along: **tax increases are unnecessary.**

#### Operating Budget Increases



### Protecting streams and the right to farm

Strict interpretation of critical area ordinances is increasingly threatening the ability of long-time local farmers to continue their agricultural-type land uses. To preserve that ability, I introduced **House Bill 2261**, which would allow farming activities to continue on land used for agriculture prior to the adoption of the Growth Management Act. The lands and their uses would still be subject to water quality standards that meet GMA goals, but would be exempt from goals that make these lands unusable for agricultural land-use activities.

This measure would protect sensitive areas while preserving the right to farm. Although the bill did not receive a hearing this year, I will continue to push for it and other common-sense solutions in the next legislative session.



*Rep. Barbara Bailey met with members of the Camano Island Fire District during their visit to the state capitol.*

### Containing health care costs a missed opportunity

Nearly 600,000 people in our state are uninsured primarily because of cost. Health insurance mandates escalate costs by as much as 50 percent. Washington has 49 mandates (including acupuncture and massage therapy) compared to Oregon which has 31 and Idaho at 13. Unfortunately, businesses and employees cannot select which mandates they want. They either have to purchase the expensive "Cadillac" health insurance with all the offerings or go without.

As ranking Republican on the House Health Care Committee, I introduced several cost-containment measures to expand access to affordable health care including:

- a **mandate freeze** and a cost-benefit analysis of current mandates;
- reforms that would provide employees with **more options** in choosing an affordable plan that meets their needs;
- changes in the **medical malpractice** laws; and
- tax-free **Health Savings Accounts** for public employees

Unfortunately, these cost-containment measures were rejected by the majority party. Instead, it proposed expansion of taxpayer-subsidized programs that would drive more people toward costly government-run health care. In the end, very little was accomplished to expand access to affordable health care.

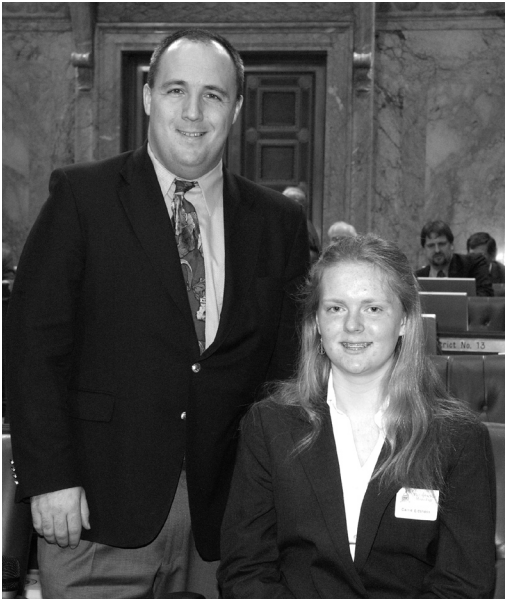
#### Health Care Crisis

**The right direction:** Contain costs to make private insurance more affordable.

**The wrong direction:** Increase taxpayer-subsidized government-run health care.

# Representative Chris Strow

## 10TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



*Rep. Strow sponsored local student Carrie Eidsness to serve as House Page during the 2005 Legislative session. Carrie, who attends Stanwood High School is the daughter of Gene and Karen Eidsness. For more information on serving as a House Page please contact Rep. Strow or Rep. Bailey's office.*

### Capital budget is a rare bright spot for the session

The capital budget appropriates money to construct and repair public buildings, such as for higher education institutions, and for other long-term investments including state land acquisitions and transfers. It also includes state money given or lent to local governments or nonprofit organizations for building infrastructure, housing, and cultural and heritage facilities.

As a Capital Budget Committee member, I had a key role in creating the state's 2005-2007 capital budget. With 93 in favor, five against, this session's capital budget vote was the strongest bipartisan vote in more than a decade, demonstrating that bipartisanship on critical issues is possible.

The 2005 capital budget provides funding for a variety of projects in the 10th District including funding to improve and preserve the lighthouse tower at **Fort Casey State Park**, which is a local landmark and tourist attraction, and \$50,000 for the **Oak Harbor High School stadium**. Other local projects include \$308,030 for water storage improvements at **Freeland**; \$834,700 for a water transmission main replacement along State Route 20 near **Oak Harbor**, \$2.4 million for the **Cedarhome Reservoir in Stanwood**, and more than \$5 million each for various improvements at **Cama Beach** and **Deception Pass**, and \$576,000 to provide the city of **Clinton** public access to the beach for the first time.

Trust land transfers funded in the House capital budget for the 10th District include: Smugglers Cove - \$600,000; High Point - \$560,000; Skyline West - \$400,000; Brainers Road - \$560,000; Glendale Creek - \$580,000; Wahl Road - \$300,000; Cutlas Point - \$400,000; Strawberry Point - \$800,000; and Upper Maxwellton Valley - \$2,430,000.

### Women's contributions during WWII will now be included in State Oral History Program

During WWII, more than 450,000 women served our nation in the United States armed forces and others provided nursing and support services to the troops. They were supported by more than two million women back home who worked in industries that supported men and women serving abroad. And then there are the women who kept our nation together by keeping our communities together and continuing the job of raising families, educating children, and taking care of the sick and elderly.

Recognizing and, more importantly, recording the important contributions women made to their local communities, the state, and nation during World War II was the objective behind **House Bill 1592**, which I sponsored this session. An identical version, **Senate Bill 5563**, which was signed into law by the governor. I worked closely with Sen. Rosa Franklin, D-Tacoma, to pass legislation to include contributions and sacrifices made by women during WWII in Washington's oral history program.



### Offering positive solutions to the operating budget fiasco

This session I co-sponsored **House Bill 1949** which would require the state to start budgeting by conducting "**zero-base**" **budget reviews** each fiscal year. It would require state government programs be justified in each fiscal year, as opposed to simply basing budgeting decisions on a previous year's funding level. This is a fundamental shift in budget policy.

I believe the state operating budget should be built on a clear forecast of the state's economic performance, and the future needs of the state while protecting those most vulnerable in our communities. I was disappointed that common-sense measures like HB 1949 were not considered by the majority party this session.

The only way we are going to create jobs and prosperity for Washington families is to create a more competitive economic climate. Placing more mandates and burdens on working families and Washington job providers through increased taxes and fees simply won't help create a better future for our children to live and work.



Election reform bills  
provide small steps

After November's election debacle we clearly needed to make significant improvements.

Eight bills signed into law will provide small steps toward improving our election system. The legislation requires changes in provisional and absentee ballots to prevent them from being counted with poll ballots before they are validated. People registering to vote will have to sign that they are eligible and understand they'll be reported to authorities if they vote illegally.

Rep. Bailey introduced an amendment (supported by 92 percent of our district survey respondents) that would require persons who vote at a poll site to show a valid photo identification. Unfortunately, that and several other Republican amendments and bills to restore voter confidence and improve the integrity of elections in our state were denied approval.

Survey responses completed

In April, a legislative survey was mailed to a sampling of citizens in our district. We received 912 responses. If you would like to see the entire survey and the responses, please contact Rep. Bailey's office and we'll be glad to send you a copy.

Gas tax too much for too long

We opposed the 9.5 cent gas tax increase, which will hike the state gas tax to 37.5 cents a gallon by July 1, 2008, making it among the highest gas taxes in the nation. New weight fees were added to all vehicles, from \$10 to \$30 a year. Motor home fees were raised to \$105.

Although the money funds a new bridge between Stanwood and Camano Island, most of the funds in the 16-year plan will be directed toward Seattle area "mega-projects." A better approach would have been for a smaller revenue increase directed at specific critical projects over a shorter period of time.

This gas tax increase hits at a time when fuel prices are at their highest and people are struggling to make ends meet. When we considered these record tax increases, the fees, and the few benefits derived for our district, we could not support this package.

